

[Transcription begins]

#15 12-28-43 Tuesday

Dear Douglas:

Generally I write to you on a Monday but because all the stores decided to keep closed yesterday, it seemed wise not to open the shop so you see what a long week-end I have had, inasmuch as we closed at noon last Friday.

Your letters are coming through very well, one received by us on the 27<sup>th</sup> was dated by you on the 21<sup>st</sup>, so we feel that we have very recent news of your well-being. How about our letters, do you receive them as quickly?

We really had a lovely Christmas except for your enforced absence and the fact that Daryl had a miserable cold which made her restless at night. Bill came home Friday night, so Marilyn spent that night there, had the presents there before breakfast as is their custom and then came back to the house for ours. Because we thought the Millards were to be alone we had invited them for dinner which worked out very well, for Marilyn went with Bill for dinner and by having the Millards, we were not alone and Larry also came unexpectedly. We had a very tender turkey, about ten pounds, I think I wrote you that I won it on a punch board for the Washington Park Community Club several weeks ago, and as it was an order and not just the bird, I was able to postpone getting it until Christmas. If I hadn't had that, I doubt if we would have had a bird, for there was not one displayed, only those in on "the know" were able to get them and many of them were sold by the half! Marilyn made delicious apple and mince pies, I made the squash and I had my usual gift of a plum pudding, so we had the traditional dinner, even to the candy and nuts, but no fruit basket, just good juicy oranges.

The tree was smaller than usual but very pretty shaped, set in the corner next to Jones, nearest the dining-room and very prettily decorated. Daryl was fascinated by the glitter and sat and looked and looked at it. The presents seemed as numerous as ever with stuffed toys and dolls predominating. Your gifts were the ones most eagerly awaited. My "silent butler"<sup>1</sup> is a beautiful thing and I am very pleased and proud of it. Thanks a lot for it. Dad has already written you thanking you for his jacket which fits perfectly and is just what he wanted. The Benchley book has already been half read

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<sup>1</sup>**Silent Butler**—A popular mid-20<sup>th</sup> century receptacle with a handle and a hinged lid in which crumbs or ashes were quietly and efficiently collected from a dining table after a meal.

by yours truly and I noticed Dad starting it last night. Grandma's gift is awaiting her visit to us some day this week. Marilyn's cook book is one of the very best and something she will use all her life and while she is living with me, I shall refer to it many times. Daryl's white kitty is just what the doctor ordered, she "loves" it against her face and it is a toy that she will cherish for several years, taking it to bed with her and in the carriage when she goes for an outing. Thanks many, many times for your selections and thoughtfulness, we appreciate every bit of it.

I tried to give Marilyn and Dad several small gifts, rather than one large one, so Dad had [a] billfold, bellows for the fireplace, Reader's Digest, Life from Marilyn and Bill, soft knitted pale beige housecoat, etc. Marilyn is starting her china set so had several pieces of that and linen for her table and a few clothes. Dad gave me a chest to keep the table silver in, gray skirt and rose sweater, pins and earrings and records, records, records. Everyone seem[ed] to go haywire on that subject this year and every one worth having. Dad bought several albums, and I gave individual ones such as Moonlight Sonata. Clara Miller gave us a two pound box of Fanny Farmers ("Thanks for the rides."). Marilyn sent us white chrysanthemums and Carol Hawes, a poinsetta [sic] plant. The list could go on and on, but I will not bore you! Chip has a toy elephant tough an supposedly guaranteed against distruction [sic] but he made short work of it in about five minutes!

The Millards stayed all evening and we gnawed on turkey bones and ate pie late in the evening, although by that time Larry had gone to see some girl.

Then Sunday I had invited the Schmids for dinner, with a nice vein roast of beef. Bill could not be with us as he had to return to his base. Several of Marilyn's friends drifted in during the afternoon and Bessie and Marilyn Snow so we were kept very busy but not too busy to speak of you often and wonder about you. We hope everything was pleasant for you and that you will have memories to cherish.

Daryl had had such restless nights that we had Dr. Bowen come yesterday and last night she slept right through which was a blessing for us all and this morning she is as chipper as a lark although still with some trace of the cold.

Dad and I went into Jones[' house] to see their things last evening. They have just had all downstairs re-papered and ceilings done and it does look lovely. Both Leland and Everett have been home. Leland starts surgery on

his return.

Lucille Donle has announced her engagement to Clayton Bacheldor, now in the Pacific, slightly wounded, Leland says that he is one who rushed you from Sigma Chi.

Edmund Brown's little Douglas was dedicated Sunday and Genevieve joined the church.

Well, the tale is all told and the work of the shop calls me. We missed you, indeed we did, but we had a happy Christmas and look forward to next year, knowing that Germany will definitely be out of it by then, and perhaps you will be based at an Atlantic port temporarily at Christmas time and can get home! Then the year after that, I am looking for the war to be over!

All our love and best wishes for the coming year.

Mother

We love your letter head with the picture of the Elden. [Transcription ends]